

A lesson in achieving redress

Sovereignty movement looks to war internees

By Kris M. Tanahara
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Japanese Americans' successful push for reparations serves as a model for native Hawaiians seeking sovereignty and redress from the U.S. government, a leader in the Hawaiian community said yesterday.

"Your success in getting an apology and reparations is a model ... for we, native Hawaiians, in our struggle to win recognition and redress," state Office of Hawaiian Affairs trustee Kina'u Boyd Kamali'i told about 75 members of the Honolulu Japanese American Citizens League during the group's annual membership luncheon at the Ala Moana Hotel.

Kamali'i and three other leaders in the Hawaiian community offered their perspectives on Hawaiian sovereignty and drew parallels between the injustice faced by both groups at the hands of the federal



Kamali'i



Kaneko

government.

"They have felt that same kind of hurt as (native Hawaiians)," said Kamali'i of the Japanese Americans interned during World War II because of their race.

"We both were done wrong by the U.S.," said Julie Cachola of the Hawaiian sovereignty group Ka Lahui Hawaii.

The JACL — which in 1972 began a long, but eventually successful effort to get congressional compensation for the 120,000 Japanese Americans in-

ternees — was one of the first non-Hawaiian groups to support the sovereignty movement.

The group's national body passed a resolution supporting the human, civil, property and sovereignty rights of native Hawaiians in 1984. The resolution was confirmed in 1986 and again last year.

Bill Kaneko, outgoing president of the local chapter, said the resolution is in line with the group's philosophy to reach beyond the Japanese American community to help others who have had their human rights violated.

What role the JACL plays in the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, however, will be determined once a model for sovereignty can be agreed upon, Kaneko said.

"How we can help is that we have a national network," he explained.

In gaining redress, Kaneko said, JACL formed a close alli-

ance with organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Jewish community and the American Civil Liberties Union.

"That's the kind of broader national support that native Hawaiians need as well," he said. The JACL can also offer the sovereignty movement a decade of legal experience, Kaneko said.

"This is *our* issue," said Franklin Odo, director of ethnic studies at the University of Hawaii, of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. He said any form of self-governance that is finally achieved will impact all residents who live in Hawaii regardless if they are native Hawaiian or not.

Also speaking yesterday were Kekuni Blaisdell of the Pro Hawaiian Sovereignty Working Group, and Hayden Burgess, director of the Institution for the Advancement of Hawaiian Affairs.